

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 01164 090725Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 L-03 FRB-03 OMB-01
ITC-01 SP-02 USIA-06 AGRE-00 AID-05 CIAE-00
COME-00 INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00 OIC-02 SIL-01
STR-07 TRSE-00 CEA-01 SS-15 CG-00 DOTE-00 FMC-01
AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 NEA-10 /136 W
-----028037 092159Z /65

R 090639Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5395
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY PARIS

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DEPARTMENT FOR EB/TRA/MA

PARIS FOR UEOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: UNCTAD, EWWT, NO
SUBJECT: RE-EVALUATION OF USG PARTICIPATION IN THE FIFTH
UNCTAD INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY GROUP (IPG) ON INTERNATIONAL
MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT

REF: A) STATE 24300, B) OSLO 694

1. SUMMARY. NORWAY FEELS IPG BEGINNING TO MAKE PROGRESS AND
WARRANT SUPPORT; THAT COMPROMISE POSSIBLE ON PUBLIC LAW ISSUES SO
CONVENTION WOULD BE BASED PRIMARILY ON PRIVATE LAW; THAT US WITH-
DRAWAL FROM IPG COULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE; AND THAT US SHOULD
DELAY ANY DECISION ON THE SUBJECT UNTIL AFTER JUNE MEETING OF
GROUP B COUNTRIES TO DISCUSS IPG MATTERS. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF MET WITH STEINAR KRINGLEBOTTEN IN SHIPPING DIVISION
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PAGE 02 OSLO 01164 090725Z

OF MINISTRY OF TRADE AND SHIPPING, TO DISCUSS POINTS RAISED REF
A. KRINGLEBOTTEN, WHO HAS PARTICIPATED IN IPG SINCE INCEPTION,
BELIEVES LACK OF PROGRESS IN FIRST MEETINGS DUE TO LDS NEED FOR
TIME TO STUDY ISSUES. HE BELIEVES THIS PROCESS IS VIRTUALLY
COMPLETE AND RESULTED IN SOME ADVANCE IN FOURTH IPG (EXAMPLES:
PROGRESS IN SUBJECTS OF CONSULTATIONS AND CUSTOMS QUESTIONS)
AND PROMISE OF MORE PROGRESS IN FIFTH IPG.

3. WITH PROGRESS IN SIGHT, GON WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO JOIN USG IF USG WITHDRAWS. FURTHERMORE, US PROMINENCE AS INTERNATIONAL TRADER AND AS INNOVATOR IN MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT MAKES US PARTICIPATION EXCEEDINGLY IMPORTANT TO IPG. KRINGLEBOTTEN ADDED THAT IF LDS SAW US AND OTHER IMPORTANT GROUP B COUNTRIES WITHDRAW FROM IPG NOW, WHEN REAL PROGRESS IS IN THE OFFING, THE LDCS MIGHT INTERPRET THIS AS SIGN THAT THE WITHDRAWING COUNTRIES WERE PROTECTING SOME GREATER INTEREST, TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF THE LDCS.

4. NORWAY CONTINUES TO FAVOR MT CONVENTION BASED ON PRIVATE LAW, BUT ALIGNS ITSELF WITH SWEDEN, WEST GERMANY, NEW ZEALAND AND OTHER B COUNTRIES WHICH BELIEVE SOME COMPROMISE POSSIBLE IN DIRECTION OF LDCS PUBLIC LAW POSITION, KRINGLEBOTTEN SAID. REGARDING CONSULTATIONS, FOR INSTANCE, LDCS MIGHT AGREE TO PUBLIC LAW POINTS BEING INCORPORATED IN GENERAL TERMS IN PREAMBLE OR ANNEX TO CONVENTION AND BEING LESS OBLIGATORY THAN IF WRITTEN INTO OPERATIVE BODY OF CONVENTION.

5. NORWAY LOOKS FORWARD TO THROUGH DISCUSSION OF THESE ISSUES IN JUNE MEETING WITH OTHER B COUNTRIES AND GREATLY HOPES THAT US WILL NOT MAKE ANY NEGATIVE DECISION BEFORE PARTICIPATING IN THAT MEETING. KRINGLEBOTTEN SAID THAT NORWAY AND SWEDEN WERE FULLY AGREED ON THAT POINT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978OSLO01164
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780106-1058
Format: TEL
From: OSLO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780388/aaaacwcf.tel
Line Count: 86
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 74714cca-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 24300, 78 OSLO 694
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3387411
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RE-EVALUATION OF USG PARTICIPATION IN THE FIFTH UNCTAD INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY GROUP (IPG) ON INTERNATIONAL MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT
TAGS: EWWT, NO, UNCTAD
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbcr://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/74714cca-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014